

of civil suits, and that the service of processes at such distance was attended with special difficulties. He also pointed out that, of the suits filed in the Kottarakara Munsiff's Court, more than one thousand belonged to Pattanapuram and prayed that, if it was not found possible to provide them with a separate Munsiff's Court, at least a Magistrate-Munsiff's Court might be established in the taluk.

Dewan's reply.—Your suggestion that one of the Judges of the High Court should be present here seems a good one. I shall consult the High Court and see whether this cannot be arranged during the future sessions of the Assembly.

In regard to your suggestion to establish a Munsiff's Court at Pattanapuram, the High Court are still of opinion that there is no necessity for a Munsiff's Court there. Pattanapuram is a taluk which is traversed by the railway and locomotion there should not be very difficult. The irregular service of processes does not by itself mean that the distances are very great. It may as well be due to the fact that process-servers are not doing their work properly.

42. Undesirability of shifting the Munsiff-Magistrate's Court at Kanjirapalli to Mundakayam.

Mr. Thomman Chakko (Member, Peermade Taluk) stated that the proposed location of the Kanjirapalli Magistrate-Munsiff's Court at Mundakayam would be inconvenient and that it might therefore be shifted to the police station compound at Kanjirapalli for the following reasons:—

(1) The *pakuthies* of Manimala, Cheruvalli, Chirakadavu, Kanjirapalli North and Kanjirapalli South would then come under the criminal jurisdiction of the new court at Mundakayam, covering an area of 13 miles east to west between the 20th and the 33rd mile stones, K. K. road, and 18 miles north to south;

(2) The situation of the police station at Kanjirapalli on the 25th mile, K. K. road, was almost central, the present Munsiff-Magistrate's Court at Ponkunnamm being at the western extremity, and the proposed location of the court at Mundakayam would be at the 33rd mile, K. K. road, far away from the centre;

(3) Of the *pakuthies* bordering on Mundakayam, Peruvantanam on the east, Punjar on the north and Ranni reserve on the south, Peruvantanam came under the jurisdiction of the Peermade First Class Magistrate and Punjar under that of the Minachil Magistrate; and

(4) The Mundakayam Magistrate would have jurisdiction only over the area covered by the European Plantations, of which Cheruvalli, the biggest, was nearer to Kanjirapalli than Mundakayam.

The Member also stated that for criminal cases most people would have to travel great distances to go to Mundakayam situated at the easternmost limit, that more than 80 per cent of the cases filed at Kanjirapalli were from the localities west of Mundakayam and that the people would not welcome such a change of jurisdiction attended with great difficulties and loss.

The Member submitted that Dewan Mr. Rajagopalachari decided, after mature consideration and consultation with local officers, that the public offices should be at Kanjirapalli, it being the centre of the jurisdiction area (*vide* G. O. No. 3149 dated 18th May 1910). The Mundakayam Rubber Planters' Association, the Punjar Chief and the people represented to the Dewan when he went there on circuit in April last that the public offices should be at the Kanjirapalli Police Station compound.

The police station compound was situated at the bank of the Chittar river with abundant supply of good water, while Ponkunnamm suffered from the disadvantage of having only wells which went dry during the hot season. The Member then characterised the decision arrived at in the matter by the Munsiff-Magistrate, Kanjirapalli, as unsound, as that decision was based mainly on the consideration of a building to be given free for the court-house, and said that the

Member's proposal would be equally convenient for purposes of civil jurisdiction. He deplored that the question had been pending final decision for the last 30 years and prayed that the same be soon settled in conformity with the opinion of the majority of the people of the locality as represented by him.

Dewan's reply.—Government have not come to any final decision in regard to the shifting of the Court. The Member's representation will be carefully considered.

43. Transfer of Civil Decrees direct from Devicolam to British India.

Mr. G. W. Cole (Member, The Kannan Devan Planters' Association) requested that power be given to the Devicolam District Munsiff's Court to transfer civil decrees direct to British Indian Courts instead of through the Parur District Court as at present. The existing provision of law caused inordinate delays which frequently enabled a debtor to remove his funds and property beyond the jurisdiction of the court to which the decree was transferred, thereby defeating the ends of justice. The Member pointed out that, if power was given to the Devicolam Commissioner to transfer decrees direct, it would be of considerable help to all employees of labour under its jurisdiction.

Dewan's reply —I quite appreciate the difficulties in your having to go to Parur. The High Court have not sent their reply in regard to this matter. We have to consult the British Government as to whether the British Courts will accept the decrees forwarded by a Munsiff of this State and take action thereon. First of all we have to find out whether there is any objection from our High Court, and, if they have no objection, we shall have to address the British Government in the matter. I shall take the necessary action, and let you know the result in due course.

IV. PRODUCTION, AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES.

44. Disabilities of the ryots of Travancore.

Mr. K. G. Thomas (Member, Nominated) began by expressing satisfaction at the Dewan giving immediate replies to the representations of the members of the Assembly, whether those replies were favourable or otherwise. He requested to convey to His Highness the Maha Raja the sentiments of loyalty and thankfulness of the ryots of Central Travancore for the innumerable benefits they had been enjoying at the hands of His Highness' Government.. Out of the total cultivable area of 30 lakhs of acres of land in this State only 21 lakhs were under actual cultivation, and out of this 15 lakhs of acres were cultivated with grain and other food crops. Calculating on that basis, the average earning of an agricultural labourer was only 10 *cash* per day, while including rubber and sugarcane cultivation it came to one *chackram* per head. The average annual earning per head in Travancore came to only Rs. 12-12 as. and the people had to meet all their expenses from this very small amount. The Member, therefore, requested Government to do everything in their power to increase the earning capacity of the people. He admitted that the Agricultural Department was rendering every help to the ryots, but it was not encouraged by Government adequately. Coming to the cultivation of cocoanut, he said that 25 lakhs of trees were affected by pests. The disease which originated some years ago had now spread over 18 taluks. It, therefore, behoved Government to take special efforts to root out the disease.

The Member then referred to the revised Agricultural Loans Rules and observed that the rate of interest was high and should be reduced to the original rate of 4 per cent. The condition of Mysore was quite different and it should not be taken as a basis of comparison. He complained that the amount of Rs. 200 allowed to be given on personal security was too small to serve any useful purpose and suggested that it should be raised to at least Rs. 500. Among the other suggestions of the Member were the following, viz.,

(1) that a sum of 5 lakhs of rupees be set apart every year for the grant of agricultural loans;